



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE**  
**AIR UNIVERSITY (AETC)**

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Colonel (Dr) Stefan Eisen Jr.  
223 Inner Circle  
Maxwell AFB, AL 36113

Federal Defenders c/o Ms Jennifer Hart  
407 RSA Tower  
201 Monroe St  
Montgomery, AL 36104

Ms Hart,

I am Stefan Eisen, currently Dean of Academics at the Air War College. I am writing on behalf of Mr. Patrick Burbank. Pat and I (and our families) have been close friends and professional associates for 34 years.

I do not wish to comment on the case at hand. I have only a summary of events and choose not to draw conclusions or make observations on what information I have – it would be inappropriate of me to do so. However, I would like to provide insight from my 34 years knowing and working with Pat. To provide a conclusion up front, I have trusted Pat with my life and my family and he has never, never let me down.

Pat and I met at the USAF Academy. We both struggled with the multitude of challenges presented at that institution; but I know one thing – Pat stuck to the honor code. I know of opportunities where Pat could have potentially taken advantage of situations, both academic and military-related, but every time Pat stuck to the honor code – “we will not lie, steal, or cheat nor tolerate anyone among us who does”. Pat has since always stuck to that code, even when doing so has put him at a short-term disadvantage. In the long-term, he knew he’d done right.

Next we both were sent to flight training in Columbus, Mississippi. Neither one of us were natural pilots; we had to work at it – and work we did. And while we were not the only ones in the class working “harder than the average bear”, Pat did something most of the other struggling students didn’t – he remained part of the team. He helped others study, gave of his free time to help others prepare for their evaluations and examinations, and was always first to volunteer and help with any project our class undertook, from social gatherings to community service.

After we completed flight training, Pat and I took different assignments, but we weren’t apart long. I was stationed at Sheppard AFB in Texas as an instructor pilot, and after he completed a tour as an instructor pilot in Colorado, he joined me at Sheppard. We flew together and trained pilots together – my life depended on his expertise and honesty – he delivered. That was the pattern of our careers for the next 20 years. We sometime were stationed apart, but often found our family and professional paths re-joining. During this time I watched him raise two good kids with his wife Debbie and not only serve honorably in the Air Force, but in the church and community as well.

There is also a unique aspect of our relationship. My wife Cathy and I have raised an autistic daughter. Johanna is now 21 and a beautiful and accomplished young lady despite her special needs. However, the road to success for Johanna had a very dismal start -- at the time of her diagnosis, we were told to “institutionalize her for she wouldn’t amount to much”. Thank God we sometimes don’t listen to advice. It took a huge family to raise Johanna; Pat and Debbie were part of that family. They made many accommodations in their home and lifestyle; it allowed Johanna to be welcomed and safe in their home. They helped with respite care when Cathy and I were worn to the bone. I literally trusted Pat with my family – and he showed compassion, love, and a level of care many people choose not to provide when faced with a friend who has a family member with significant special needs.

I hope this has provided you with an insight of my long relationship with Pat. It spans over three decades and I hope it spans the next 3 decades. If you asked me today to put my life and the safety and well being of my family in Pats’ hands – I would not hesitate to say yes. I thank you for your valuable time in this matter. If you have any questions or would like to continue this dialogue, please call me at anytime (home: 334-356-2936 or cell: 334-430-0169). My e-mail is [stefeisen@knology.net](mailto:stefeisen@knology.net). Again, thank you.

*Stefan Eisen Jr.*